

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-02 INR-10 INT-05 L-03
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2004
INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USDOC WASHDC
USLO RIYADH

UNCLAS JIDDA 3513

E.O. 11652: N/A
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SUBJ: VISIT BY INTERNATIONAL SOLAR COMMERCIALIZATION WORKING GROUP
(ISCWG)

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(C) 77 OSAA 1712, (D) JIDDA 0847, (E) ISW 605
(F) DHAHRAN 591

1. EMBASSY WELCOMES VISIT BY THE ISCWG AND WILL ASSIST IN
MAKING APPOINTMENTS DURING THE GROUP'S STAY IN RIYADH FROM
JUNE 29 TO JULY 2, MR. VAN ROBERTSON WILL SERVE AS CONTROL
OFFICER FOR THE GROUP.

2. THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA IS JUST BEGINNING TO TAKE ITS
FIRST STEPS INTO THE SOLAR ENERGY FIELD ALTHOUGH IT IS CLEAR
THAT IT IS INTERESTED IN PLAYING A PROMINENT ROLE IN THIS
FIELD FOR THE FUTURE. AS CAN BE SEEN BY THE TEXT OF THE JOINT
COMMUNIQUE CITED REF E, SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED
STATES HAVE UNDERTAKEN A FIVE-YEAR PROGRAM FOR BOTH R&D
IN SOLAR ENERGY AND EXPLOITATION OF EXISTING TECHNOLOGY.
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EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT ISCWG TEAM MEMBERS READ REFTELS
PRIOR COMING TO SAUDI ARABIA TO GET FLAVOR OF WHAT HAS
TRANSPIRED LOCALLY IN SOLAR ENERGY DURING THE PAST YEAR.

3. THE THREE MAJOR ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE KINGDOM,
KING ABD-AL-AZIZ UNIVERSITY (JIDDA), UNIVERSITY OF
ALL HAVE MODEST, RELATIVELY PRIMITIVE SOLAR ENERGY RE-

SEARCH/STUDY PROGRAMS. THESE PROGRAMS ARE AIMED MAINLY AT ACQUAINTING THEIR STUDENTS WITH THOSE ASPECTS OF SOLAR ENERGY THAT CAN BE EXPLOITED WITHIN THE KINGDOM, I.E., ELECTRICITY FOR WATER PUMPS. THERE IS AT PRESENT NO PRIVATE SECTOR RESEARCH TAKING PLACE IN SAUDI ARABIA.

4. PRIVATE SECTOR INTEREST IN SOLAR ENERGY IS CONFINED TO THE COMMERCIAL POSSIBILITIES OF UTILIZING EXISTING TECHNOLOGY, PRIMARILY IN THE AREA OF WATER HEATING, COOLING, AS WELL AS SOME DEGREE OF ELECTRICAL GENERATION. SEVERAL WESTERN GOVERNMENTS HAVE ENGAGED IN AGGRESSIVE CAMPAIGNS TO PUSH THEIR HOMEGROWN TECHNOLOGY ON THE SAUDIS. THE FRENCH HAVE BEEN THE MOST SUCCESSFUL, HAVING MANAGED TO SELL A SMALL 35 KW FREON-DRIVEN SOLAR GENERATOR TO THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AS AN EXPERIMENTAL STATION. GENERATOR IS BEING TESTED TO DETERMINE ITS ABILITY TO PROVIDE WATER PUMPING FACILITIES AND ELECTRICITY TO REMOTE VILLAGES.

5. COMMERCIALY THE SAUDI ARABIAN MARKET HAS GOOD POTENTIAL. SEVERL MINISTRIES HAVE ALREADY MADE USE OF SOLAR ENERGY TECHNOLOGY IN THEIR BUILDING PROGRAMS AND THERE IS GREAT EXPECTATION THAT FUTURE HOUSING PROJECTS WILL INCORPORATE STATE OF THE ART SOLAR ENERGY EQUIPMENT. THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, FOR INSTANCE, HAS INCORPORATED A FLAT - PLATE SOLAR COLLECTOR IN THE DESIGN FOR ITS AIRBORNE UNCLASSIFIED

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SCHOOL. THE PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE HOT WATER AND SPACE HEATING FOR THE SCHOOL.

6. EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT ISCWG TEAM, SHOULD, AT A MINIMUM, MEET WITH THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS TO OBTAIN AN OVERVIEW OF SOLAR ENERGY COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL FOR THE KINGDOM:

- A. DR. RIDA OBAID, DIRECTOR OF THE SAUDI ARABIAN NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SANCST).
- B. MAHMUD TAIBA, GOVERNOR OF THE GENERAL ELECTRICITY CORPORATION.
- C. RASHID KHAN, EMPLOYEE OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICE OF WATER RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY (OWRT), PRESENTLY ASSIGNED TDY TO THE SALINE WATER CONVERSION CORP. (SWCC) IN JIDDA.
- D. MR. J. DWAN, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING MCDONNELL DAUGLAS ASTRONAUTICS COMPANY, 5301 BOLSA AVE., HUNTINGTON, CALIF, (TELEX: 67-8426).

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